



April 8, 2004

CLEARING UP THE “QUAGMIRE” IN IRAQ: WHY KENNEDY’S VIETNAM IS *NOT* BUSH’S IRAQ

Comparing Vietnam and Iraq

Point 1:

- a) What year did President Kennedy send forces to Vietnam? *In 1961, JFK sent “advisers” to Vietnam, but they were not authorized to use force (authorization to use force would not occur for nearly another 3 years).*
- b) What year did President Bush send forces to Iraq? *In 2003, under Congressional authorization to use force that was provided in advance of any U.S. forces being deployed (P.L. 107-243).*

Point 2:

- a) When did Congress authorize use of force in Vietnam? *Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution in 1964 that authorized use of force. However, this was repealed by Congress in January 1971.*
- b) When did Congress authorize use of force in Iraq? *October 2002 (P.L. 107-243).*

Point 3:

- a) How many troops did the U.S. send to Vietnam? *Approximately 3.5 million from 1964-75.*
- b) How many troops has the U.S. sent to Iraq? *466,985 total personnel were deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom, as of April 30, 2003 (Source: CRS-cited report prepared by the staff of the U.S. Central Command, Combined Forces Air Component Commander).*

Point 4:

- a) How many draftees were sent to Vietnam? *Approximately 2 million.*
- b) How many draftees were sent to Iraq? *Zero. The U.S. has an all-volunteer armed force.*

Point 5:

- a) How many U.S. soldiers died in Vietnam? ***58,178 names are on the Vietnam Wall (approximately 20,000 were draftees).***
- b) How many U.S. soldiers have died in Iraq? ***Approximately 620.***

Point 6:

- A) How many allies joined the U.S. in the Vietnam War? ***Eight (South Vietnam, Australia, South Korea, Thailand, New Zealand, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Spain).***
- B) How many allies joined the U.S. in Iraq? ***30, including 16 of 26 NATO allies.***

Point 7:

- a) At the war's end, how many North Vietnamese were liberated by U.S. forces during the war? ***Zero. North Vietnam captured South Vietnam.***
- b) At the war's end, how many Iraqis were liberated by U.S. forces during the war? ***25 million.***

Point 8:

- a) What year and month did U.S. forces take Hanoi? ***This never happened during 11 years of war.***
- b) What year and month did U.S. forces take Baghdad? ***April, 2003 (less than 30 days after the start of the war).***

Point 9:

- a) When did U.S. post-war reconstruction efforts begin in North Vietnam? ***This never happened. North Vietnam captured South Vietnam.***
- b) When did U.S. post-war reconstruction efforts begin in Iraq? ***Immediately.***

Point 10:

- a) How many different ethnic factions and religions had to be balanced in Vietnam? ***North Vietnam was estimated to be 85% ethnic Vietnamese. However, once all of Vietnam became Communist, religious and ethnic factions did not matter to the anti-democratic government.***
- b) How many different ethnic factions and religions must be balanced in Iraq? ***Many: Sunnis, Shias, Kurds, Christians, Jews, and others.***

Point 11:

- a) How soon after the start of the Vietnam War did Senate Democrats vote to cut off funding and benefits for soldiers fighting in the field? ***Nine years after President Kennedy sent advisors to Vietnam, and nearly six years after Congress authorized the use of force in Vietnam (June 1970, vote #180, H.R. 15628).***
- b) How soon after the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom did Senate Democrats vote to cut off funding and benefits for U.S. soldiers fighting in the field? ***Only seven months (October 2003, vote #400, S. 1689). Sen. John Kerry (D-MA) and 11 others voted against Iraq supplemental.***

Point 12:

- a) Did the U.S. armed forces lose the Vietnam War? *No, Congress did when it failed to support South Vietnam after the peace treaty.*
- b) Will the U.S. armed forces lose the peace in Iraq? *This depends on whether Congress fails to support America's efforts to reconstruct Iraq and build democracy there.*

Comparing Ho Chi Minh and Saddam Hussein

Point 13:

- a) How long did it take U.S. forces to capture Ho Chi Minh? *This never happened.*
- b) How long did it take U.S. forces to capture Saddam Hussein? *Less than nine months from the start of the war, December 13, 2003.*

Point 14:

- a) What happened to the Vietnamese that fled Vietnam to Cambodia during the war? *Many were murdered by Pol Pot; many others never returned.*
- b) What happened after the war to the ethnic minorities and Iraqis that fled Iraq to neighboring countries? *Almost all have returned and started to build new lives under democracy and a free-market economy.*

Point 15:

- a) How many UNSC resolutions did Ho Chi Minh violate? *None.*
- b) How many UNSC resolutions did Saddam Hussein violate? *17, beginning with UNSC Res. 687, which was part of the 1991 Gulf War cease-fire agreement.*

Point 16:

- a) Against how many Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Lao did Ho Chi Minh use chemical and biological weapons? *None.*
- b) Against how many Iraqis, Iranians, and Kurds did Saddam Hussein use chemical and biological weapons? *Thousands. Exact fatality figures are still not known.*